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Washington State Senate

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March 31, 2000

Department of the Army
Walla Walla District Corps of Engineers
Attention: Lower Snake River Study
201 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the removal of four dams located on the Lower Snake River (Ice Harbor, Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite dams). If plans to breach the dams are carried out, the consequences would be felt across our state. The effects on Eastern Washington's economy would be particularly brutal.

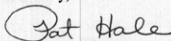
Some of the impacts of dam removal include:

- Significant reduction in the total generating capacity for the Bonneville Power Administration, resulting in higher electric rates for the Northwest ratepayers
 - \$150 million per year in higher electricity costs -- an estimated increase of 9-25 percent
 - Loss of enough energy to meet Seattle's annual power needs
- Barge traffic which now is able to navigate the river up to Lewiston, Idaho, would be halted at the Tri-Cities (approximately 130 miles away)
 - Tens of thousands of trucks would be needed to replace barge transportation and move freight, such as agricultural crops, to westside ports
 - Increased road congestion and safety problems
- Farmers withdrawing irrigation water from the Snake River would likely be unable to continue irrigating in an economically feasible manner
 - A loss of over 36,000 acres of high value irrigated farmland which currently produces enough food to feed a million people

- Dam removal would create 30,000 acres of mud flats along the lower Snake River
-- 100 to 150 million cubic yards of sediment would be transported downstream harming the Columbia River ecosystem.
- An uncertain business climate for the Northwest and certain job losses

I know of no greater threat to the prosperity and well being of our state than the breaching of our Northwest dams. Dam destruction simply does not make sense.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pat Hale". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Senator Patricia S. Hale